
Title: Shadows Part II

Author:

Quite a stone there,
Nalynn," Brisid remarked.

"An onyx. Perhaps Braldt
gave this to me." She
hugged the jewel to her
chest for a second and
then looped the chain
over her neck. "How do I
look?" She asked,
gesturing to the necklace.

"Beautiful!" commented
Riklaun. Nalynn smiled and
peered into the hole,
searching for more
treasures. As she reached
into the opening, the
Elves heard the walls
groaning. Dust and pebbles
fell from the ceiling.
Larger stones began
falling to the floor. A
heavy ceiling timber
snapped, narrowly missing
Nalynn on its descent to
the ground.

"The building's collapsing!
We must leave now!"
Riklaun shouted, pushing
Nalynn ahead of him out
of the room. The Elves
sprinted down the hallway
and exited the building
just before the upper
floors fell into the
ground floor. The high
stone walls crumbled,
disappearing into the
growing dust cloud. The
Elves watched at a safe
distance as the
once-proud structure
crashed down into the
basements. After many
minutes of tumbling

stones, the dust cloud
thinned, allowing the
rubble to be seen.

Nalynn closed her eyes
and gripped her diary
tightly to her breast,
thankful the building had
survived long enough for
the book's recovery. The
three Elves walked away
from the ruined building
into the woods.

For a brief second, the
shadow envisioned a stone
building crumbling. Dust
filled the air obscuring
the image as the vision
ended. A growl of
frustration silenced the
forest animals. Crumpled
foliage flexed upwards as
a crushing weight left
them. Before the stems
had fully risen, though,
the leaves withered
brown, dropping away to
death.

Strongbow sat in his
study, the redwood walls
softly glowing from the
sunlight streaming through
the windows of the cozy
room. The smell of the
rosy wood always eased
his mind making it an
ideal place to study and
read, or just relax and
think. The ancient tome in
front of him held his
attention however, as he
pored over page after
page of the knowledge
contained within, coming
ever closer to
understanding what it was
he sought there. He
looked up for a moment,
gazing out the window at
the cloudless azure sky,
it was a beautiful day
indeed. Reaching out, he
picked up the glass of
Elven wine sitting on the
desk, and taking a sip,
smiled at the contentment

the room always brought
him. He set the glass
down, and started to
return to his studies
when the room began to
darken. The light
continued to fade rapidly,
and a feeling of great
unease swept over him
like none he had felt
before.

Strongbow could barely
see as he stood to go to
the window--something
was terribly wrong! No
clouds,
Chapter I

Rayella sat deep in
thought, her pale
coloration sharply offset
by the shadowy jet black
of her companion,
Lightning. Once an
ordinary wolf, Lightning
was warped by magic as
a pup and now was a
fully sentient being
trapped in a large wolf's
body. The fire flickered
and reflected off of the
crystal cavern around
them casting eerie
shadows that seemed to
foretell the future yet
mimic the past all in one
subtle motion. Both of
their minds were thinking
along the same track, the
immense party that had
been at her home today.
All of the people...
Dearest Strongbow, Tizer,
Father (Jared), Rik, and
Brisid, Taelsin, Coriadae,
Laerithil, and of course
Nalynn. And as if
Lightning had been reading
her mind he lifted his
head and commented.

"Ray, did you notice that
Nal was acting a bit
strange today?", he spoke
mentally to her.

"Aye. Actually Light, I had been noticing that. I'm kind of worried."

"Riklaun said something about rediscovering her past, but I do not know what that meant. I think we should see if there is anything we can do for her."

"I was just about to suggest that."

"I wonder what it's like to figure out what you really are" his voice trailed off into that well worn path of thought: the path of not knowing what he was nor what he had been.

"Light.. you okay?"

Yeah, I'm fine....," the wolf said rather brusquely with a scowl on his lupine face. "It's nothing."

"Let's go to Brisid's to see if we can run into Nal there, alright?"
Lightning agreed and the pair moved out of the lair--the Elf of light and the once-wolf of shadow: a striking team in search of a friend.

Nalynn sat in her darkened room, lighted candles glowing warmly. She had re-read the diary several times, basking in the now-remembered memories of a time gone by, before she was an Elf. Though her husband was long dead, it was a comfort to her to have this precious chronicle. She placed the diary in a silk-lined mithril box and gently lowered it into the

chest at the foot of the bed.

Returning to the small table, she examined the onyx necklace which had also been secreted away in the recesses of that ancient wall. It was a beautiful thing, though heavy - all that gold, no doubt. She took it and placed it in her jewelry box. To wear it in concert with the strand of emeralds Jared Syn had given her would be, well, just too showy.

She closed the lid, then re-opening it, took it out again. She placed it around her neck. As she studied her image in the mirror, she gently tucked the necklace inside her bodice. "So much the better," she said.

Blowing out the candles, she lay down on the bed, gazing at the stars in the night sky, until slumber overtook her.

A blood curdling scream broke the silence of the night. Nalynn bolted upright in her bed. She looked around in the darkened room and saw nothing. "Me'sambe" she said as light slowly filled the room. Nalynn quickly dressed and went outside. The drowsy Elf hurried down the streets of Floodblest to see what had happened. She saw Riklaun, Brisid and several other Elves standing near the guest quarters. She hurried over to them.

"What's going on?" Nal inquired. Riklaun, along with Tizer and Thranduil went inside the building.

Nalynn started to enter the building, but Brisid stopped her.

"You do not want to go in there."

"Why? What's wrong?"

She asked. Before Brisid could answer, Tizer came bursting out of the building clutching his gut. He did not get far when he started heaving. The door remained open and Nal caught a glimpse of inside. She gasped and turned away from the sight. She grabbed hold of Brisid tightly in a hug. "Gods, what happened in there?"

"We do not know. Edan found it when he came back. It was his brother in there." Brisid said.